

## when we first... by deathvalleyusa

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**Summary:**

how Billy Hargrove met Chrissy DiMartino.

## when we first...

Hawkins, Indiana had been introduced to a game called Slaps, courtesy of Billy Hargrove.

It was about as riveting as it sounded; two people standing face to face, slapping each other open palmed on the face until one raised their hand in resignation. Billy had become a master of the brutal game back in California, and he was willing to let this podunk town in on the action that the wild ones back home had created. It was a willing fight, a show of machismo, and *incredibly* fun to watch on the sidelines.

So far, he was 0-2, with Tommy pussying out after the first two slaps and another metalhead going nine rounds before giving up. Another challenger had stepped up. The blonde had already gotten a few slaps in, finally feeling an intrusive ache in his jaw. Another swat, and the door opened behind them. Billy felt his eyes flit to the motion, regretting the decision almost immediately.

Two girls, one blonde and the other brunette, and a slouchy looking male had arrived, one of their friends making a beeline to the girls as squeals filled their general space. The brunette he recognized from one of his classes, her name escaping him entirely.

His gaze was interrupted by a smack, sending his reeling harder than he'd care to admit. A chorus of onlookers cheered as Billy swore to himself, straightening again. Out of the corner of his eye, he saw the girl stop to watch for a second before rolling her eyes, a smile pulling bright pink lips taut. He whipped his hand against his challenger's face, eyes still trying to trace the brunette's movement.

He spotted her curled hair, piled high into a teased ponytail. A white sleeveless t-shirt hugged her curves, tucked into her rolled jeans that currently had her date's protective hand slipped into her front pocket. Whoever she was, she seemed to pulse with a magnetism that kept drawing his eyes to her.

**SMACK.**

"Shit!" he yelled, staggering before raising a hand in defeat. A familiar metallic taste welled up in his mouth, spots of red coating the floor as he spat. The redhead who had beat him stuck out a hand; Billy graciously shook it before wandering off into the crowd.

He held onto a vain hope that girl hadn't seen him lose. Baby blues flitted around, trying to survey the sea of people before giving up. Tommy had found him, handing him a cold one before ushering him towards Billy's ragtag set of friends he'd stolen from the former King of Hawkins. The talk was banal; he'd tuned out after Garret had brought up some idiot who died from a chemical leak. It was a girl he'd never met and from the sound of it, wouldn't have cared to, had she had still been around. With a sigh, he clapped Tommy on the back, and bolted.

Billy made his way to the makeshift bar in the corner of the living room. Opting to continue his road from buzzed to comfortably drunk was way more productive than trailing some girl who wasn't even available. He surveyed the spread of different alcohols, trying to decide how experimental he felt like being tonight, when a voice piped up beside him.

"Hey, we have Econ together, right?"

His head turned to his right, eyes widening for a second in surprise before he quickly regained his composure. *Crap*. The girl. Her hazel eyes traced over his face, crinkled into a bright smile.

"I think so," he said slowly. Not that he could really remember who was in that class, with the frequency that he skipped it. "You, uh, want a drink?"

"Yeah, thanks. I'm, uh, Chrissy, by the way," she said, barely audible above the music blaring.

"Billy," he answered, flashing a grin as he busied himself with pouring two strong Malibu and Cokes into a couple of unused plastic cups.

"Yeah, the new Keg King," she teased, grabbing the drink in his outstretched hand. "I saw the whole thing, *very* impressive. You

should put that on your resume.”

He snickered, rolling his eyes before resting his gaze on her. “Definitely. I’m sure they’ll be wowed by the fact that I didn’t barf my brains out after.”

Chrissy laughed, sweet and free. She looked down into her cup, tapping the side with her nail before looking back up at him.

“You smoke, right?” she asked. He nodded, taking a drink. “Can I bum one off you? My friend finished the rest of my pack.”

“Yeah, sure.” Billy started to dig in his pocket, only to look back at the brunette. “Actually, you wanna go out back? Quieter out there, y’know.”

She shrugged, flipping her grown-out bangs from her face. “Sure.”

The two meandered through the crowded house, Chrissy pulling on her jacket as they settled on the steps of the porch. Billy pulled out his pack of Marlboro Reds and Zippo, watching as Chrissy grimaced at the sight of the pack. He took out a cigarette, offering the pack to her.

“What?”

“Nothing,” she said, taking out a stick. He lit his own before leaning over to let her draw in her first puff. He couldn’t help but let out a chuckle as she coughed a bit.

“Let me guess,” he drawled, taking another drag. “You only smoke lights and menthols. I’m guessing... Virginia Slims or Salems?”

“No,” she protested, leaning back on her hands. “I mean, I mostly smoke lights but Reds are *nasty*. ”

“Then don’t smoke it,” he said simply. “Put it out, I’ll save it for later.”

“It’s fine,” Chrissy insisted, swatting his hand away as he lazily tried to take the cigarette from her. He gave a laugh, watching her exhale a plume of smoke. “Thank you for sharing. *Such* a gentleman.”

“Yeah, sure.” He licked at his lips, flicking his lighter on and off.

“How’re you liking Hawkins?”

“It, uh, sucks a lot less when I’m drunk.”

Chrissy let out a laugh, taking a swig of her beer. “Yeah, I hear that. This place is kind of a shithole. It’s not that far from the city, though, so you can at least get out of here on weekends.”

“It’s, like, an hour drive to Indianapolis.”

“Could be worse,” she shrugged. “My aunt lives in New York, and she’s three hours from the nearest city.”

“That sounds like hell.”

“Well, she chose to. She lives on some weird hippie commune near the Catskills,” Chrissy explained.

“That sounds even worse,” Billy said matter-of-factly. He took another drag, giving her outfit a once over again. “Is that where you get the Madonna digs? She picks them out and sends them to you or something?”

Chrissy pursed her lips, clicking her tongue before looking back at him. “I visited this summer and picked my *own* clothes, thank you very much. And what’s wrong with the way Madonna dresses? It’s cool.”

“I never said it wasn’t,” he said, eyebrows raising as a smile broke on his face. “It’s just different. Doesn’t look like a costume on you.”

“I’ll take that as a compliment, I guess,” she grinned back, flicking the ash off her cigarette. “And who are you supposed to be copying? David Lee Roth?”

“I was going more for Robbin Crosby tonight, but Roth works too,” he teased back.

“Hmm. You know, Robbin’s more my type, anyway.” She finished her cigarette, putting the butt out against the bottom of her black

sneaker. "You wanna head back inside? We can go dance or something."

"You know," he mused, taking one last drag before flicking the butt onto the cement, "not really. Whoever's in charge of music tonight has shit taste."

"We could always just make out." The tone of her proposition teased between a joke and a real suggestion. He had to admit, he wasn't opposed to the idea.

"Didn't I see you come with someone?"

She shrugged, a cheeky smile playing on her lips. "It's not anything serious. Plus, he's kind of a drag."

Billy let out a laugh, leaning in close to her ear. "I don't think you'd want to ruin whatever reputation you have by doing that."

Chrissy pulled away, eyes full of fire at the comment.

"Okay," she said slowly, biting her lip. "How about a question: If I kissed you, right now, would you kiss me back?"

"Wh..." *God, she's serious*, he thought. "I mean, you'll never know unless you try."

Lips gently pressed against his before deepening slightly, his chin tingling from the electric touch of her nails against his jaw. Liquor and Reds coated her tongue, along with the tartness of a citrus chaser he'd seen her down earlier, beckoning him to take another taste. Before he had a chance to indulge further, Chrissy pulled away, her breath forming translucent clouds in the fall air.

"Damn," he mouths, barely audible to any besides her. *A fire*, he thought. *That's what she is*. Anything she touches she *consumes*, and he'd kill to be nothing but ashes in her hands.

A hand ran through the curly mess he called hair, desperate to be occupied before he thoughtlessly grabbed her closer. "I think we need to test this the other way around though. So, if I kiss *you*, will you kiss back?"

“Only one way to find out.”

He barely let the words fall from her mouth before letting his parted lips meet hers. His teeth tugged softly at her lower lip, their noses nudged against each other. Fingers slid between the blonde wisps that framed his face, and all at once he was on *fire* and frozen in place, not ready for this moment to end.

But it had to. Chrissy pulled away as he was acquainting himself with the curve of her back under her jacket. She wordlessly took his arm in her hand, pressing his hand to the wooden deck. He watched as she leaned close, only to stand up as her lip toyed under her teeth. As soon as she had begun their game, she had left.

Billy wrenched his head back before swiping a hand through his hair. She'd left her drink, which he quickly finished before downing his own. He'd rather be teetering on the edge of blackout drunk than wrestling with the need to seek her out again.

There wasn't much he remembered after that. More shitty beer, more mixed drinks that were more liquor than mixer. Someone passed around a joint, and he *swore* she was hovering around, taking hits with the rest of the group before flitting away.

What he did remember, although it'd been extremely fuzzy, was Chrissy had found her way back to him, coaxing him into a crowd of dancing classmates. She fell against him as she stumbled, prompting both of them to laugh hysterically in their inebriated state. Someone else coming by, snapping photos with a Polaroid. He remembered hoisting Chrissy up, her legs wrapping around him as he stole another kiss. The flash, blinding in their crossfaded stupor.

There was a moment after the flashes and the carefree kisses that he could never quite remember fully. There was a yell, Chrissy's name coming from behind him, and the slouchy guy she came with looking incredibly angry. He remembered Chrissy was no longer in his arms, instead being dragged away by the arm by the guy. More yelling. Tommy making fun of the bright pink smudged across his face. A Polaroid, handed to him, only to be lost in his glove compartment for weeks. And then, nothing else.

Monday came, and with it, the Economics class he shared with Chrissy DiMartino.

She'd shown up a few minutes late, slipping Billy a note before plunking down in her desk, two rows to his left. He had caught her staring at him a few times, their locked gaze lingering more than they intended. Fully uninterested in the class — *when was he ever?* — Billy unfolded the notebook paper under his desk, giving a grin at her bubbly penmanship.

***Meet me after class? Trade you a kiss for a smoke.***